African Americans are a colonized minority group that face various injustices and disadvantages. Throughout the 1980’s in the midst of the war on drugs, African Americans faced injustices due to improper legislation, racial profiling, and discrimination. By analyzing incarceration rates of this time period, it’s plain to see a huge disparity between African Americans and other racial groups.

### Legislation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Rockefeller drug laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Comprehensive Crime Control Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Anti-Drug Abuse Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Crime Control Act</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Incarceration

- Arrest rate for drug possession/use increased by 89% between 1980 and 1989
- In NY state, drug arrest rates for African Americans went from over 12,000 to over 70,000 by 1990
- Most of those in NY state prisons hailed from 7 neighborhoods: South Bronx, Harlem, Brownsville, East New York, South Jamaica, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Manhattan’s Lower East Side

### Racial Profiling

- Many people believed African Americans were more likely to carry drugs out of any other race
- Magazine articles and newspapers featured pictures and stories of African Americans being arrested.

### Discrimination

- Job discrimination kept African Americans from providing for themselves and their families which led to increased desperation which led many to a life of crime
- African Americans received longer and harsher sentences for drug violations than any other race

### Conclusions

Throughout the 1980’s African Americans were subjected to a plethora of injustices and cruelty. Police, the media, and even the communities targeted them as the source of the drug problem. Despite government legislation, racial profiling, discrimination, and incarceration ultimately aided in the creation of a permanent underclass society. It was a lack of emphasis on rehabilitation that helped perpetuate these injustices throughout the 80’s.

### Sources